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SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS

Discussion.

1. Common Aims of the Chinese and Soviet Governments.

It is a matter of record that China and the USSR have followed common policies since the formation of the People's Republic of China, and this is, of course, no coincidence. Because the Peiping propaganda line echoes that of Moscow, it might be argued that Chinese Communist policy is dictated from the USSR, and present intelligence can offer no evidence for or against this view. As yet, however, there has been no sign of any reluctance on the part of the Chinese in complying with Soviet demands. Until the government of Communist China embarks on a course of policy so directly contrary to its own national interests that the fact would be inescapable even to the Chinese Communist leaders themselves, it probably cannot be concluded that the USSR actually dictates China's policies.

It is probable that Communist China and the Soviet Union will join in common effort to:

- a. advance the aims of World Communism as generally outlined in Marxist-Leninist doctrine;
- b. prepare for the East-West conflict they both believe to be inevitable;
- c. make it clear that World Communism must recognize the pre-eminence of the USSR (this position has repeatedly been maintained by Mao and his government, and their actions have been consistent with it);
- d. increase, within certain limits, the military or economic strength of either or both countries;

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- e. eliminate what little is left of Western influence in China;
- f. form a diplomatic policy designed to advance Communist aims at the expense of the West;
- g. extend Communism to the presently non-Communist countries of the Far East;
- h. in view of the special danger to both countries of US "aggression" through the instrument of a rearmed Japan, take any steps within their power to prevent a resurgence of Japanese military and economic strength.

If the above are accurate statements of common Soviet-Chinese Communist aims, there is a broad field of policy in which it is unnecessary for the USSR to exert pressure on the Peiping government.

2. Soviet Political Control of China.

China's relationship with the USSR differs considerably from that of the Eastern European "Satellites." The present governments of the "Satellites" owe their existence to the USSR and would probably be seriously weakened or overthrown were it not for Soviet support. None of these countries nor any combination of them has any hope of resisting the Soviet Union, and they are so situated that they can be administered as if they were integral parts of the USSR.

Mao Tse-tung and the principal members of his government have struggled for twenty-five years to attain control of China. For the most part, they have succeeded without appreciable material aid from the USSR. The bulk of Soviet aid has consisted of (a) the Soviet maneuvers of 1945 in

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Manchuria which permitted Chinese Communists to acquire territory and large Japanese military stocks; and (b) psychological support as well as instruction in doctrine and organization. Although China is not now in a military position to challenge the USSR, it has one of the world's largest ground armies backed by the world's largest population, and, even in its present undeveloped state, could not be considered helpless against the USSR. China is too large and complex to be efficiently administered from Moscow in the manner of small, compact "satellites." The loss of China as a Soviet ally at this time or in the near future would mean an important shift in the world balance of power unfavorable to the USSR and cause a particularly embarrassing rift in the common front of Communist nations. Even though, in the event of an open break, the USSR has the military capability of bringing China eventually to terms, the USSR would be most unlikely to resort to military force because (a) the result might be years of exhausting military effort similar to that undertaken by Japan and possibly with similar results; (b) the USSR would unmistakably expose its imperialistic aims to all Asia and to the world; and (c) the Soviet Union might become vulnerable to US and UN intervention at a time when military operations in the East were sapping much of the power needed in Europe. Thus, Mao Tse-tung, if he wished to do so, could probably defy the Kremlin with far greater assurance of immunity from military reprisals than Tito had in 1948.

In the position they have occupied since the formation of the Peiping government the Chinese have had little choice but to align themselves with

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the Soviet bloc. In addition to general Western hostility to Communism-- which the Chinese leaders, as Communists, have tended to exaggerate--US postwar support of the Kuomintang made it difficult if not impossible for the Chinese to seek a Western alliance, even if they had desired to do so. Should an impasse be reached in Sino-Soviet relations such as to force Chinese abandonment of the alliance, however, the Chinese leaders would not only be at liberty to turn to the West, but would probably be forced to do so in order to maintain themselves in power. In that case, considering the desirability from a Western point of view of separating China from the USSR, they would have good reason to expect Western aid and support.

The Russians have had ample opportunity to study past mistakes of foreign powers in China, including their own, and the circumspection with which they appear so far to have been proceeding in their relations with China would indicate that they believe their aims in China will be more satisfactorily advanced if they avoid any appearance of undue influence on the Chinese government reminiscent of Western "colonialism" and "imperialism." It would appear, therefore, that although the general objective of the USSR in its relations with China probably is the transformation of China into a Soviet satellite through gaining complete control over the machinery of the Chinese Communist Party and government, the USSR will, for the present, exercise considerable restraint in trying to transform its present influence in Communist China into control.

3. Soviet Economic Control of China.

The Chinese Communists retain preponderant control over most of their

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economic affairs, but the USSR enjoys a preferred position which ranges from influence in areas such as trade to virtual control in the case of certain civil air routes. Soviet influence has become more and more manifest over the past year with the establishment of new Sino-Soviet companies (which are joint enterprises in theory but actually allow Soviet control), the introduction of Soviet advisers into Chinese economic enterprises, and the increased proportion of China's foreign trade directed to the Soviet Union. As yet, there appears to be no strong resentment against the increase in Soviet influence, but it is probable that disappointment with Soviet performances will, in the next few years, provoke many Chinese to question the advantages of their economic ties to the USSR. Soviet credits to the Chinese have not, thus far, been particularly generous. With China increasingly dependent on the USSR as a source of supply for items which the West refuses to ship, the USSR also may injure its standing with the Chinese if Soviet deliveries do not measure up to Chinese expectations with respect to quantity or quality. It is to be noted, however, that the economic factors tending to estrange China from the USSR should not become operative in effective degree until possibly 1952.

4. Conflicting Aims of the Chinese and Soviet Governments.

There are points of potential conflict between the Peiping and Moscow governments which, if not resolved by successful compromise, may weaken or destroy the alliance. Chief among these appear to be (a) Soviet interference in Chinese affairs; (b) the territory of Manchuria;

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(c) Chinese participation in Soviet-sponsored wars; (d) control of Asian Communist movements; and (e) the border regions of Inner and Outer Mongolia, and Sinkiang.

a. Soviet Interference in Chinese Affairs.

At present there are some 15-20,000 Soviet "advisers" who are "assisting" the Chinese in military, economic, and governmental activities. The degree of success of these advisers in actually directing Chinese affairs is not known. The majority of these "advisers" appear to be military and to be attached to the Chinese Communist Air Force, Navy, and Army in that order. Within the context of governmental control, a primary problem facing Soviet efforts to convert China into a satellite is establishing control over the Chinese military organization. This problem involves the reduction of the power of the anti-Stalinists among the major military leaders and the transfer to the Central Government of the loyalty which Chinese troops have always felt for their personal commanders. If the USSR succeeds in consolidating such control over the Chinese military forces, it will have gone far toward reducing China to the subordinate status the USSR presumably desires. Chinese military leaders, however, would stubbornly resist such a development. The result of too direct or hasty a Soviet effort to consolidate control over the Chinese Army might, therefore, be the outbreak of a military revolt which neither the Chinese nor the Soviet government could easily suppress.

Although the Chinese Communist government presently appears to be dominated by faithful Stalinists who can be trusted in most things to follow

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a line entirely satisfactory to Moscow, it is apparent that Soviet agents, both nationals of the USSR and Moscow-trained Chinese, are in important positions in the Chinese government, the Chinese Communist Party, and the Chinese police system where they are endeavoring to make certain that the government conforms to the Soviet line. Agents of the Soviet Ministry of State Security (MGB) also are operating in China, and the MGB is undoubtedly training its Chinese counterpart, which will be used for the suppression of independent Chinese thought. Whether or not these Soviet agents in the Chinese party and government do more than offer advice, it is obvious that they represent a potential means through which the Peiping regime could be brought under complete Soviet control. The various means through which the USSR is now extending its influence over China, if sufficiently extended, would lead to such complete Soviet control of the instruments of power in China that control of the state would pass from Peiping to Moscow. Unless the Chinese take steps to reverse the trend, the USSR will eventually attain its goal of reducing China to the role of a helpless satellite.

The USSR may be expected, for reasons of self-interest, to refrain from attempting to control Peiping directly at this time because the implementation of the Peiping government's policy depends upon the fidelity of a large number of functionaries who would resent direct Soviet control. If its efforts at control moved too fast and became too obvious, the USSR would encounter certain significant obstacles inherent in (a) traditional Chinese resentment of foreign domination; (b) the existence of independent intelligence networks and secret

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societies competing with and impeding the work of the official government security organizations; and (c) the capacity for maintenance of independent foreign relations still retained by the Peiping government. With few exceptions, moreover, Chinese Communist leaders do not appear willing to accept absolute and abject subservience to the USSR, even while their policies are leading them in that direction. Probably for this reason, the USSR appears to be proceeding with a degree of circumspection in extending its control over the Chinese government. Should the USSR resort to more direct action, however, and attempt to enforce its will throughout China, it would encounter strong resentment and increasing resistance. Under such circumstances, a Soviet attempt to administer this vast country with its lethargic population and undeveloped communications would be doomed to almost certain failure.

Soviet authorities may also realize that in the minds of the politically conscious Chinese, the coming of Chinese "Socialism" is not synonymous with control of China by a foreign state. If the Chinese people became convinced that their new government, rather than being the first in many years to be free of foreign influence, was actually the instrumentality of a foreign state, the Peiping government might be discredited with its own people and might, in consequence, be forced to resist further Soviet arrogation of power.

b. Manchuria.

The area comprised in Manchuria and Korea is essential to the economic development of both China and Japan. Control of this area has been a historic Russian objective, and it is evident that the present rulers of

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Russia have not abandoned this objective. There is no question that present Soviet control is considerable, and little question that complete control of the area is a Soviet aim. To date, the Chinese government seems to have offered no effective opposition to Soviet infiltration of Manchuria. The Chinese Communists agreed to what was in effect a continuation of the Sino-Soviet treaty of 1945 giving the USSR base rights in Port Arthur and Dairen and control of the Chinese Chang-chun Railroad until 1953 or prior conclusion of a Japanese peace treaty. There is no evidence of Chinese objection to the large garrisons at the treaty ports or the number of "guards" on the railway. The provincial government of Manchuria appears to be thoroughly under Soviet domination.

These developments may be a result of a desire on the part of the Chinese government to gain favor with the USSR, the senior socialist state; a disposition on the part of a new government to make preliminary concessions to a stronger one; or a temporary inability on the part of the Chinese government to prevent Soviet incursions. If the last is the chief reason, it is possible that by the time the Chinese feel both inclined and able to resist, the Soviets will have gained such complete control of the territory that they cannot be dislodged.

It is improbable, however, that this point has been reached as yet. The Chinese still have at least nominal political control over Manchuria, and if they wished to do so, could face the USSR with the dilemma of yielding Manchuria or using force to gain full control of it. With respect to Manchuria, Mao Tse-tung and his chief advisers will probably encounter many major issues in which they will have to choose

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between promoting the ultimate interests of the eventual socialist world state on the one hand and advancing the more immediate national interests of China on the other, both of which goals they are on record as determined to realize. They must be aware that, if they allowed control of Manchuria to pass to the Soviet Union, the economic consequences for China as a whole would be very serious, and their whole program for China's industrial development would be critically impaired.

c. Chinese Participation in Soviet-Sponsored Wars.

Although current international Communist strategy relies on indigenous groups for the spread of Communism and avoids sending Soviet armed forces or those of any other Communist state across international frontiers, the USSR may favor sending Chinese Communist armies into Korea, Indochina, or Japan. If so, in any situation other than a full-scale East-West war in which China would become an ally of the USSR, Soviet authorities would probably meet resistance on the part of the Chinese government.

China has been at war for many years. Although the nation is not as desolated as a smaller and more modern country would be, there is no question that the Chinese feel an urgent need for peace. Meanwhile, China's own civil war is by no means at an end in that Tibet and Taiwan still remain to be "liberated" and that--by Mao Tse-tung's own admission--there are still some 400,000 "bandits" remaining to be pacified. The only advantage for China arising out of a foreign war at this time would probably be the negative gain of eliminating growing US strength in the

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Far East before it could be considered too much of a menace to Communist China's future safety.

If, therefore, the USSR were to urge Chinese Communist participation in external aggression which would involve it in war with the US or other Western countries, it is probable that China at this time would not willingly accept such a risk of war and that consequently the alliance would be subjected to considerable strain.

d. Control of Asian Communist Movements.

To date, any external control that may exist over indigenous Communist movements in Indochina, Burma, India, the Philippines, Japan, and Korea appears to be in the hands of the USSR. The Chinese, however, dominate the active Communist movement in Malaya; moreover, the Chinese rather than the USSR are furnishing most of the direct aid to the Viet Minh movement in Indochina; military intervention to aid the North Koreans is a Chinese as well as a Soviet capability; and China is in a better geographical position than the USSR to support Communism in most of these countries. The Peiping regime is, therefore, in a position to exert increasing influence in the Communist movements in Asia. Although serious conflict of interest would develop if China showed a disposition to challenge Soviet leadership in Asian Communism, present indications are that China probably will not precipitate difficulties with the USSR on this question in the immediate future.

e. Mongolia and Sinkiang.

The Chinese Communist government recognizes the independence of Outer Mongolia and has offered no objection to the fact of Soviet

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control. Inner Mongolia is part of China; the Mongols, however, are generally anti-Chinese and susceptible to Pan-Mongol propaganda, and they are therefore vulnerable to an extension of Soviet influence through Outer Mongolia. Thus far, there has been no evidence of serious friction between Peiping and Moscow regarding Inner Mongolia. In Sinkiang, Soviet influence is much further advanced, and the Chinese will probably lose control over that province to the USSR eventually. Chinese acquiescence in Soviet encroachment so far indicates that Peiping probably will not make a major issue of Sinkiang.

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